



Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations

Integrated Missions Revisited
Synthesis of Findings
Conference Background Note

Campbell, Kaspersen and Weir
Oslo, October 2007

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Preface

In 2006, the Norwegian Government launched an initiative to take stock of the current debate on multidimensional and integrated peace operations. The project is a follow-up to the work of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) on the Integrated Missions Concept², and aims to map the degree of progress made towards integration as well as the remaining challenges and dilemmas. To this end, between March and October 2007, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs organised a series of regional consultations and seminars in Beijing (co-hosted by China), Addis Ababa, Geneva, New York, Johannesburg (co-hosted by South Africa) and Brussels. In addition to the main seminar series, a number of additional consultations, field visits and meetings have taken place. The aim of this series of seminars and consultations was to gather experiences and views from practitioners and decision makers across a wide range of operational and institutional settings. The findings are synthesised below.³

¹ This paper was written by Susanna P. **Campbell**, Anja T. **Kaspersen** and Erin **Weir**. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors. The text may not be printed in part or in full without the permission of the authors. The authors are grateful for the insightful comments and support of several individuals, including Colin Keating, Alan Doss, Espen Barth Eide, Ross Mountain, Lise Grande, Michael Møller, Laura Londen, Salman Ahmed, Shepard Forman, Raymond Johansen, Halvor Sætre, Kristina L. Revheim, Jostein Leiro, Carlos Santos Cruz, Anne Herrhausen, Robert Mood and the authors of the individual seminar proceedings.

² Eide, Kaspersen, Kent and von Hippel. 'Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations'. Independent Study Commissioned by the UN ECHA. May 2005

³ Individual seminar proceedings can be downloaded from:
www.regjeringen.no/integratedmissions

1. Framing the discussion

The strategic aims of United Nations (UN) peace operations have changed fundamentally in recent years, as UN mandates have become increasingly multidimensional in design and purpose. According to a 2004 UN Security Council (SC) statement, peacekeeping “should be part of an overall strategy to consolidate and sustain peace”.⁴ This point was echoed by the Secretary-General in 2005: “security is only one part of the quest for a self-sustaining peace... Peacebuilding cannot start upon the conclusion of a peacekeeping operation. It is not an exit strategy for UN peacekeepers, but the guiding principle for our entry”.⁵ Integration aims to establish the structures, policies, and procedures necessary to better align the peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding approaches that make up today’s multidimensional peace operations.

1.1 Integration: responding to new and complex challenges

The rapid increase in the number, size and multidimensionality of peace operations over the past ten years has left the UN at the limits of its capacity. Member states have responded to this growth by augmenting the number of staff available to plan for and manage peace operations, although the number of qualified civilian staff remains far too low. They have also improved mechanisms for faster deployment of peace operations, and the implementation of quick impact projects intended to deliver a peace dividend. Nonetheless, the provisions for quick or early impact in the mission mandate and the assessed mission budget remain insufficient.

Early impact, supported by quickly dispersible funds under the overall authority of the SRSG, has proven in several cases to be a very effective measure for ensuring an early positive impact of the mission and for building confidence with the local population during critical phases of the mission. It also has potential to serve as an incentive for programmatic

⁴ UN Document S/PRST/2004/16 of 17 May 2004

⁵ Report of the Secretary-General, ‘Implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations’, United Nations General Assembly, 29 December 2005, A/60/640, para. 22.

integration within the UN mission. For example, the allocation of easily dispersible funds to the UN Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), under the control of the SRSG and DSRSG/RC/HC, enabled the mission to achieve a quick, visible impact at a critical time. In spite of these advances on the ground, however, the directives and systems that govern quickly dispersible funds are insufficient. Nonetheless, the reforms so far of UN's policies, procedures and structures have not kept pace with the broadened scope and rapid increase in demand for peace operations.

The successful implementation of today's SC mandates relies on UN entities well beyond the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) the World Bank, among others. In addition, the success of peace operations increasingly depends on the support and cooperation of non-UN actors – the host government and population in the country of deployment, the neighbouring countries, other multilateral organisations (i.e., the International financial institutions (IFIs), the African Union, the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)), international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local civil society organisations (CSOs).

The integrated mission concept is an attempt to address two perennial problems of international intervention in post-conflict environments: 1) the lack of coordination and coherence among the increasing multitude of actors intervening to stop war and/or build peace, and 2) peace operations' over-reliance on military and political approaches, to the exclusion of other capacities that would enable them to address both the proximate and the root causes of violent conflict. In the absence of sequential and simultaneous linkages between the peacemaking, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and prevention aspects of post-conflict intervention, precious resources will be wasted and crucial windows of opportunity will be lost. The integrated mission concept, and its inherent dilemmas and challenges, is comparable to the "whole of government approach" that is being attempted by a number of member states and the "comprehensive

approach” that is being debated within NATO as well as the current “security and development” focus of the EU. In fact, the success of the integrated mission concept will be significantly influenced by the progress of these coherence processes within member states and other inter-governmental organizations.

The Secretary-General (SG) has identified “the integration of all parts of the United Nations system in the planning and delivery of field operations” as the “essence – and the challenge – of complex peace operations.”⁶ Here the SG points to one of the core paradoxes of integration: at the same time as there is a significant need for greater integration of the UN’s capacities, integration is one of the UN’s biggest challenges. Integration enables the UN to sequentially and simultaneously link its conflict (and sometimes crisis) management capacities - diplomacy, peacekeeping, development, human rights, security sector reform, rule of law, and sometimes humanitarian, among others – into a coherent support strategy so that the impact of its overall effort is greater than the sum of its disparate parts.⁷ And yet, the UN structure is highly fragmented – the antithesis of integrated. Its dispersed entities, and their separate governance structures, procedures, and cultures, make integration its greatest challenge.

An evolving concept: definitions, reforms, and consensus

While there is broad agreement on the need for integrated approaches – “the impact of our work is reduced by the way that we disperse it among the different parts of our bureaucracy”⁸ – the form and function of integrated missions continues to evolve. The creation of integrated missions should therefore be understood as a institutional reform process that includes *the development of initiatives that aim to increase the performance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of UN peace operations by enabling the coherent (simultaneous and sequential) allocation of resources towards common strategic ends.*

⁶ UN Document A/60/640 of 29 December 2005

⁷ “Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions”, para. 4.

⁸ UN Document A/51/950 of 14 July 1997

Integrated missions aim to improve both the *management* and the *impact* of multidimensional peace operations. The *management objective* of integration seeks to reduce the overlap of efforts and wasted resources that occur when parallel systems are established by different UN entities. As described by the SG, “Integration calls upon all actors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness of the UN presence at the country level, including through minimizing duplication and optimizing available logistical, human, and financial resources to meet the combined aims and mandates of the various components of the UN presence”.⁹

The *impact objective* of integration aims to increase the effectiveness of peace operations by directing the UN’s political, military, humanitarian, development and human rights capacities towards common strategic priorities.¹⁰ Ideally, these strategic priorities should be derived from a comprehensive peace agreement between the parties to the conflict. “Through this integrated process, the UN system seeks to maximize its contribution towards countries emerging from conflict by engaging its different capabilities in a coherent and mutually supportive manner.”¹¹ It is increasingly recognised that the guidance on integrated missions must explicitly address the inherent dilemmas that arise in the quest for coherence. This includes, for instance, the tension between the need for clear political direction for the political, military and developmental activities on the one hand, and the importance of maintaining respect for the humanitarian principles of independence and impartiality on the other.

Initially, the UN sought to improve the management and impact of peace operations by designating a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) as the leader and voice of the UN effort, and one of his/her deputies as the person responsible for coordinating the development and humanitarian communities present in the country. Since the release of the report of the Special Panel on Peace Operations (Brahimi

⁹ United Nations, *Integrated Missions Planning Process (IMPP)*, Guidelines Endorsed by the Secretary-General on 13 June 2006, p. 4.

¹⁰ “Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions,” para. 4.

¹¹ “Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions,” para. 4, emphasis added.

Report) in 2000¹², the UN has instituted several additional reforms that aim to increase the efficiency (management and structural reforms) and effectiveness (delivery and impact) of UN peace operations through the vehicle of “integration”.

An important measure, in this regard, has been the development of the UN Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP), which includes all relevant UN entities in the planning and preparation of multidimensional peace operations. Similarly important are the ongoing efforts to develop a “Capstone Doctrine” that defines “the nature, scope and core business of contemporary UN peacekeeping operations, within the broader context of international efforts”¹³. At the strategic level, individual peace operations have developed compacts and consolidated assistance or peace strategies/frameworks with the host country that set out the objectives and conditions of the partnership. The UN has also improved the recruitment processes for the leaders of integrated missions, and has developed guidance notes to clarify their roles and responsibilities. At the operational level, the UN has developed Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS)¹⁴.

In an effort to “enhance the Organization’s capacity for peace and security operations”¹⁵ a decision was also reached earlier this year¹⁶ to “realign” the current peacekeeping architecture into two different departments – one covering operations, the other covering support. The impact and implications of this reform on the integrated mission concept remain to be seen. Another related development has been the establishment of an integrated planning cell and integrated operational teams (IOT) to serve as core “vehicles” to integrate the two departments, reinforce the IMPP, and serve as the “one stop shop” for both field missions and partners alike.

¹² UN Document A/55/305 – S/2000/809

¹³ See <http://pbpu.unlb.org/pbps/library/Capstone%20Doctrine%20-%20Consultation%20Draft.pdf> for more information

¹⁴ See <http://www.unddr.org/iddrs/> for more information

¹⁵ UN Document A/61/668 of 13 February 2007

¹⁶ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10602.doc.htm>

In spite of the significant progress made in the form of the abovementioned reforms, much work remains. Many of these reforms have been stove-piped and have not kept pace with the increased demands on peace operations, nor have they surmounted many of the other barriers to their implementation. As a result, many innovations in the field have taken place in spite of, not due to, the UN's policies and procedures. In order to establish unprecedented strategic and programmatic integration in the UN missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), Sierra Leone (UNOISIL) and Burundi (BINUB), UN staff expended time and energy working around inflexible structures and procedures, significantly increasing transaction costs, with little or no guidance from their respective headquarters.

Lessons learned and innovative new approaches at headquarters and in the field have led to a conceptual consensus on several aspects of integrated missions. Integration occurs at different levels: a) policy (i.e. intergovernmental processes and deliberations); b) strategic (i.e. consolidated plans, budgets, priorities, frameworks, work plans); c) programmatic (i.e. joint programming and execution) and d) administrative (i.e. common services, resources, logistics, transport).

Similarly, integration can take place to varying degrees: a) full integration (common budget, programme, premises, and reporting lines); b) partial (common work plan but separate reporting lines and/or implementation) and c) parallel processes and execution (no shared plan, but still an element of coordination). The level and degree of integration should be determined by the particular circumstances of the post-conflict country and the desired impact of the peace operation on the dynamics in that country.

2. Barriers to integration

In spite of the important advances made towards more efficient and effective integrated missions, numerous barriers remain.

2.1 Overcoming fragmentation

The UN structure tends towards fragmentation, not integration. The UN system is a highly complex bureaucracy made up of 16 specialised agencies, 14 funds and programmes, and 17 departments and offices, all with different mandates and many with different governance structures, funding sources, administrative practices, business practices and partners (including regional organizations IFIs, regional banks, non-governmental organizations, and others). In addition to the challenges presented by a fragmented multilateral structure, integration is also challenged by the UN's need to formulate strategies in collaboration with its numerous partners, including the host government, relevant banks, other donors, regional organisations, and non-governmental organizations.

The integrated mission concept thus challenges the assumptions, perceptions, procedures, processes, performance and accountability mechanisms that govern the UN system at large. Nonetheless, many of the reforms intended to create integrated missions do not address the inherent fragmentation within the UN and “even when mandates intersect, UN entities tend to operate alone with little synergy and coordination between them”.¹⁷

2.2 Incomplete reforms

In comparing the goal of integration with what is practically and politically feasible, one finds that reality falls markedly short of aspirations. While normative changes in UN objectives and policies have expanded the reach of peace operations, the architects of these policies have stopped short of providing the will, capacity and incentives for UN entities to transform their

¹⁷ UN Document A/59/2001 of 21 March 2005

internal structure so that they can better integrate and function together without the current high transaction costs.

The proposals to increase the integration between UN departments, agencies, funds, programmes¹⁸ and other partners are considered to be superficial, stove-piped, and based on an overly hierarchical model. As a result, they have not been fully implemented across the spectrum of UN entities. In addition, many of the UN entities that are now engaged in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacekeeping are doing so with cognitive, normative and regulatory structures developed for a different purpose (i.e., the more understated aims that existed at the founding of each UN entity). In contrast to normal development, humanitarian, security, or human rights programming, strategies intended to support prevention, peacemaking or peacebuilding must be targeted toward particular windows of opportunity in the conflict environment so that they can build a framework for self-sustaining peace. If the current “disintegrated” structure of the UN is to have the intended impact on post-conflict contexts, the structures, incentives and routines that govern its component parts also have to be transformed.

2.3 Organisational culture

Each UN entity has its own culture that corresponds to its mandate and its programmatic focus (i.e., humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, rule of law). UN entities often lack familiarity with the culture, language, and procedures of other UN entities, which creates a significant barrier to the development of integrated strategies and approaches. For example, experience with the Integrated Mission Planning Process (IMPP) has shown that one of the most time-consuming aspects, and perhaps one of its most important contributions, has been the process of breaking down the cultural and semantic barriers that exist between different UN entities, as well as mapping their comparative advantages.

¹⁸ The term ‘agencies’ includes all UN Departments, Programs, Funds, and Specialized Agencies, unless specific distinctions are being made between them.

The increasing focus on partnerships with regional organisations also presents cultural challenges. Regional organisations' structures, cultures and processes are different from those of the UN entities, presenting significant challenges to issues relating to command and control, coherence, coordination and UN legitimacy.¹⁹ Building systematic cooperation with regional organisations requires that the UN make a substantial effort to understand institutional differences, realign procedures and management cultures, create common ground, and develop common objectives and priorities.

2.4 Different organisational aims and imperatives

While peace and stability are widely agreed to be desirable, the individual aims of the numerous organisations involved in the UN's multidimensional response tend to differ substantially. This is most obvious in the case of humanitarian organisations. A key element of the debate about the integrated mission concept is the concern that integrating humanitarian components into peace operations could undermine the independence and impartiality of humanitarian actors in times of conflict – factors seen as vital for humanitarian access and staff security during a violent conflict. The concern has been further exacerbated by the fact that, with the growing complexities on the ground, UN humanitarian entities found themselves dependent upon NGOs to implement their programmes. The incorporation of humanitarian action into the SC mandates²⁰ and the broader work of the UN on the ground has been seen as intrusive and as a potential threat to humanitarian principles. As the debate has matured, there is now broader agreement that, while the UN activities are inherently political and as such perceived to be incompatible with humanitarian core principles, there is a need for both types of responses. Nonetheless, while the undeniable need for coordination between political and humanitarian actors remains a challenge, it is a manageable one.

¹⁹ Forman, S. Presentation at the seminar on “Multidimensional and integrated peaceoperations: trends and challenges” New York (Beijing). March 2007.

²⁰ UN Document S/PRST/2000/7 of 13 March 2007

2.5 The tension between standardisation and flexibility

An integrated approach requires that UN entities and processes become more field-oriented, flexible and adaptable so that they can work together more effectively and adapt to the changing dynamics of post-conflict environments. At the same time, each UN entity should operate within a standard set of procedures and be guided by a clear doctrine, which helps to ensure professionalism and accountability. Nonetheless, most UN agencies, even when they support the integrated mission concept in principle, have not yet fully adapted to the new demands for both standardization and flexibility posed by the increasing complexity on the ground. This is due to several factors: the slowness of intergovernmental processes; bureaucratic rigidity; differences in the organisational culture of UN agencies and decision-making bodies; a mismatch between available resources and mandates; and the fact that the organisation is driven by the demands of mandate execution rather than the demands of delivery, impact and accountability. On the one hand, integration requires a tight structure able to quickly execute what the organisation is mandated to do, and, on the other hand, it requires a flexible structure that is able to adapt and reconfigure in a fluid conflict environment. This tension presents an important institutional challenge that should be addressed.

2.6 Poor accountability as a disincentive for integration

The performance review mechanism for peace operations is insufficient, and there is no common instrument or effort to evaluate the overall impact, effectiveness and efficiency of a peace operation. Without system-wide accountability, there are few incentives for an integrated strategy, and few incentives to change the templates and administrative procedures that block integration. Moreover, decision-makers do not have the information necessary to make mid-course corrections or reconfigure the UN structure to respond to changes in the context of the war-to-peace trajectory. Improved integration requires improved accountability and increased incentives for each UN agency, and for each staff member within each agency, to integrate with other agencies.

2.7 Fragmented governing and financing structures

In reports, evaluations and policy documents from the UN, World Bank, and the OECD-DAC, the same point is made repeatedly: the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN's response is dependent on flexible and reliable funding. Nonetheless, current UN funding, administrative and support arrangements often lead to unhealthy competition and fragmentation, serving as a disincentive to coherence. This undermines the integrity of the organisation and reinforces a reactive, quick-fix approach rather than promoting a proactive solution-based approach.

In addition, it is necessary to strive towards better alignment of mandates, processes and resources. The authorising SC resolution sets the direction for and decides the mandate of the peace operation, while the General Assembly or governing boards oversee its implementation, creating a significant gap between the mandating, resourcing, and accountability institutions. In addition, peace operation mandates are often the result of a hard won compromise, which also often leads to a gap between expectations and resources.

2.8 Administrative practices

The UN system has made important progress with strategic and programmatic integration, as shown by the experience in the DRC where MONUC piloted approaches that are now being reviewed and used by other missions. The support of member states in adapting administrative regulations and practice was central to the success of the integrated approach in the DRC.²¹ However, despite a commitment to do better, integration at the administrative level lags far behind strategic and programme integration. Common services are difficult to arrange, the sharing of assets is discouraged and many administrative arrangements remain inflexible, all of which present a significant barrier to the improved management and impact of integration.

²¹ Mountain, R. Presentation at the Seminar on “Multidimensional and Integrated Peace Operations: Trends and Challenges”, Beijing, March 2007.

3. Working toward an “Oslo Consensus” on Integrated UN Missions

The main argument of the 2005 ECHA Report on Integrated Missions still stands: “form must follow function.”²² The function of a peace operation ultimately should be determined by the desired impact. This requires an organisational structure that is both systematic and flexible. As the SG has pointed out, creating a single monolithic integrated entity “would not necessarily solve the fundamental problem of developing, maintaining and mobilising the range of skills required to address multidimensional problems”.²³ Mandates must be linked to political processes and engagement. Budgets need to support and create incentives for integration, and must promote appropriate trade-offs between efficiency and flexibility. Human resources must support integration through aligning hiring practices and conditions, training and career paths.

Much of the basis of the UN’s coordination problem appears to stem from a self-limiting view of peace operations as a choice between two opposite approaches to organisation: an ad hoc bottom-up approach or a top-down approach. Neither alone has proven sustainable. The reliance on these as organizing principles are, in part, due to the absence of incentives or accountability for more comprehensive organisational change with regard to post-conflict activities. As stated by the SG, “earlier reforms addressed the symptoms, more than the causes of, our shortcomings. It is now time to reach for deeper, more fundamental change... [to enable the organization] to perform the new kinds of operations that Member States now expect of it”.²⁴

²² Eide, Kaspersen, Kent and von Hippel. ’Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations. Independent Study Commissioned by the UN ECHA. May 2005

²³ UN Secretary General presentation to the Chief Executive Board 28 October 2005

²⁴ Statement by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly to introduce the Report on "Investing in the United Nations"
(<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10602.doc.htm>)

To be able to meet the challenges posed by this shift in aims and the methods to achieve them, existing shortfalls in UN capacity and dilemmas surrounding integration must be addressed. It is also important to note that although policy coherence, coordination and integration are highly desirable modes of operations – caution is urged to avoid integrated missions becoming a panacea or a “fig leaf” to fill the void of a broader, robust political process. Similarly, integration should not be seen as an administrative template, or a goal in itself. It is a strategic and organisational tool to help the UN achieve its objective of collective peace and security through the collective and coherent action of its member states and entities.

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